

# Summer 2025 Ad Trends: Generative AI enters its pilot phase, advertisers bullish on CTV



Generative AI remains the single biggest driver of innovation in advertising, but most companies are still in their pilot and testing phases with the technology, according to a recent industry survey from [Start.io](#) and AdTech God.

And while generative AI remains in high focus for nearly half of companies in the advertising ecosystem, solving the persistent challenges of measurement and attribution remain a bigger priority.

In a recent survey of people working in the advertising industry\*, some **45%** of respondents said generative AI was the biggest driver of innovation in advertising in 2025. Roughly **90%** of respondents said generative AI is impacting their business.

Most advertising companies seem to still be in their early stages with generative AI, with roughly **38%** saying they were piloting or testing generative AI applications.

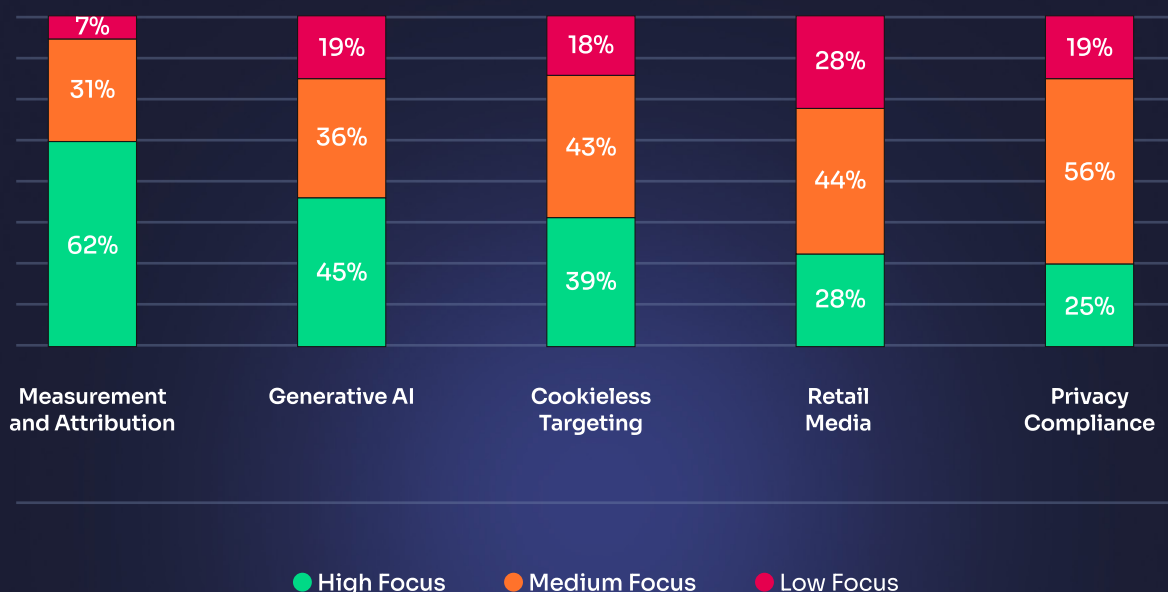
Roughly **23%** of respondents said generative AI has “significantly transformed” their operations, while **28%** said generative AI had resulted in “minor enhancements” to their work.

Just **10%** said generative AI had resulted in “no measurable impact” to their business.

And while generative AI remains a high priority for the advertising industry, there’s one challenge that stands above it: Measurement and attribution.

**Brands want to know that their ads are being delivered to real, and interested, audiences. Accurately measuring a campaign’s performance across—in some cases—hundreds of millions of impressions remains a persistent challenge for the industry.**

Asked to rank their priorities, respondents said:



The industry is split on whether the global economy is heading toward a recession.

Around 31% of respondents said an economic slowdown was “likely,” while 31% said they expected to see growth in 2025. 25% said the economy would stay the same, and roughly 13% said they didn’t know.

Brands are more bullish on the economy, with roughly 76% of respondents saying their clients have either increased their marketing spend, or kept it the same as 2024\*\*.

CTV remains the top channel for marketing spend in 2025, with 1 out of 3 respondents saying their clients planned to increase their spend on CTV. Mobile advertising and retail media followed closely behind, at 24% and 20%, respectively.

Mobile, first-party data signals remain the most trusted source of audience segmentation information, with 1 out of 3 respondents saying they trusted in-app data more than any other data source. Mobile ads are best for targeting, with nearly 57% of respondents saying they achieved the most accurate audience targeting on mobile devices.



Notes:

- Survey respondents self-identified as working for an advertising technology company (70.58% of respondents), advertising agency (14.7% of respondents), and either a brand/advertiser, media company, consultant or other (14.72%)
- Asked how clients have changed their budgets between 2024 and 2025, respondents said brands increased budgets (41.17%), kept budgets the same (35.29%), decreased their budgets (17.64%), or that it was still too early to tell (5.88%).

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